

	Per month.	Per member.
Alimentation	1.60	—
Building	1.02	1.48
Wood	1.23	1.36
Coachbuilding	2.42	2.57
Schoemaking	1.23	1.40
Metallurgy	2.02	2.05
Tobacco	2.61	2.91
Textile	1.63	2.03
Transport	1.57	1.60

During the last three years most of the trades unions affiliated with our National Trades Union Central have endeavoured to transform the basis of their organisation. The federative system is continually losing ground in place of national trades unions.

We are progressing towards modern trades unionism whose object is to concentrate the forces of the organised proletariat against the combined forces of the employers.

**Cooperation.** — The *Federation of Cooperative Societies* is gaining more and more ground in our little country; at the end of December 1909 it comprised 174 adhering societies with 140,730 members who had paid a capital of 1,942,266 francs 17 centimes.

The annual sales of the cooperative food societies amounted to 40,655,358 frs. 84 and the profits realised were 3,855,443 frs. 90.

The landed property possessed by the cooperative societies of distribution amounts to 14,837,114 frs. 28 and they employ a staff of 2,123 persons.

As the Cooperative societies have to support the local organisation everywhere, very few of them have up to now respected the decision to devote 1/2 % of the profits to propaganda through the press; however sometime since they decided in favour of gratuitous subscription to consumers, at the expense of the cooperative societies; that is to say that in addition to materiel welfare they also provide for intellectual welfare.

## XX

# SERVIA

Following the report of our Party for 1906, we would point out that during the last three years political life in Servia has been comparatively quiet. However, the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of 1908, was the cause of tremendous national excitement in the country which was almost transformed into war action. Fortunately at the end of this crisis, the former quiet was again restored, but with considerably increased militarism.

The policy of our bourgeoisie has recently been principally decided by these two forces. The conflict between the two radical Parties which has remained undecided, during the Skupshtina election of June 1908, led to a coalition, and this government was supported by a strong majority in Parliament. On the other hand the customs difference with Austria Hungary threatened to place the country in a difficult economic position.

Our Party took part during this time in the Skupshtina elections in 1908 in a few towns and again retained the seat in Kragujevac; they carried on without interruption the struggle which a social democratic has to carry on always and everywhere, but gave quite special attention to their internal development and reinforcement. Thus the numbers of organisations was increased, the number of Party members

tripled (1950 in 1909 against 615 in 1907). It is curious that out of 5000 professionally organised workingmen, only a little more than a third part belong to political organisations. This is explained by the fact that up to four years ago the trades union organisations were not practically separate from the political ones. So that with the exception of the intellectual side membership of the one organisation implied membership of the other. As our party and the trades unions are closely connected, the former previous method is still put into practice.

The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina also placed the Social democracy at the end of 1908 and beginning 1909 in an extremely difficult position. Without going into the details of our Party's actions, we will just point out that in the struggle against the dynastic-militarist tendencies during the crisis, the Party did its utmost. The fight was carried on in the meetings of parliament and in the press and in this fight it is known that our representative in the Skupshtina, Comrade Kazlerovic, was insulted. The position of the Party during the annexation crisis was all the more difficult, that naturally in the ranks of our organisations a very strong revolutionary protest against the annexation was also felt, and this constituted a danger that our element would be carried away in the stream of patriotism. However during the whole of the movement in favour of war, the Party succeeded in cleansing the natural national feeling, which springs from a nation's instinct of self preservation and self determination, from all mixed feelings, and so the crisis passed without in any way weakening or otherwise damaging our organisations.

It must be borne in mind that the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is no simple alteration of form, and for that reason it will bring with it serious consequences for the peace in the Balkans. Our Party informed the International Socialist Bureau of this during the annexation crisis, and there is no reason now why they should alter their opinion. *Peace in the*

*Balkans can only be temporary* and it is *not only* the extremely difficult economic position of Serbia from which a catastrophe is threatened. This conviction has caused our Party to try to organise mutual and systematic action on the part of all socialist parties in the Balkans against militarism and war. At the first social democratic conference in the Balkans, which took place at Christmas 1909 in Belgrade, this was the only question discussed and a resolution was passed, which was published also in the Bulletin of the International Socialist Bureau and in the *Neue Zeit*.

The parliamentary activity of our Party has been continuous and energetic, however it has to limit itself chiefly to criticism and interpellation on account of infringement of coalition rights, and especially for persecutions of the workmen and hushing up of strikes. Our representative is literally overwhelmed with work of this sort, which is to be expected in a country in which the awakening proletariat has to fight for every position at one and the same time.

There is no social legislation in our country. A guild system (*esnafska uredba*) is still in force, which was voted about 70 years ago. Naturally it does not know any of the modern relations between labour and capital, and for this reason our Party, since its formation, has made it its first duty to operate labour protection legislation and compulsory insurance, through the government. At the same time the Party had to fight against a bill which sought to confirm the ancient privileges of artisans. Up to the present this struggle is still going on. A certain amount of success has been obtained, inasmuch as the above mentioned bill has had to be withdrawn, in order that with the collaboration of a representative of the Central federation of trades unions a new bill may be prepared which also embodies protection and insurance of the workmen. Although the proletariat cannot be quite satisfied with this bill, yet it contains a quantity of useful clauses for the protection of the workingman, and represents an important, one might almost say gigantic advance over the old

bill. The best part of it is this, that it contains many clauses out of the most modern European labour legislation. This bill is now being discussed in the Skupshtina and will probably be passed during the month of June. We can calmly say that the withdrawal of the old useless bill and the elaboration of a new and better one was the result of the tenacious, continuous and energetic action of our Party. It was also this action that brought the new bill before the Skupshtina so rapidly. The party is still continuing its activity in this direction, in order to prevent an adjournment of this question, which has occurred so often, and to extort the improvements of the new bill. For one or two clauses of the bill, which had been drawn up by a special commission, were afterwards changed for the worse in the cabinet.

Besides provisions for the protection of labour, the new bill contains also full guarantee of the right of coalition and strike. Up to the present such rights and guarantees have not existed at all in our country. The organisations were formed and strikes were conducted without reference to any legislation whatever on the matter. Everything was done through inevitable necessity and not only were strict police measures and the decrees of criminal law brought to bear against the organisation and the strikers, but they also had recourse to brute force. To almost every strike, the police replied by arrest, banishment and ill-treatment of the workingmen. For the coalminers' strike in East Servia, the soldiers were called in, and the great strike of the sugar hands in Belgrad was quelled by shooting down the workingmen.

Within the last three years, three elections have taken place; once for Parliament (June 1, 1908, and two municipal elections. Only in a few towns did the Party take part in the elections. It has gained the following results: a) at the Parliamentary elections they gained 3056 votes and one representative was returned (town of Kragujevac). b). at the municipal elections of 1907 a total of 2070 votes and 18 representatives. In 1910, 2849 votes and 22 representatives.

Our country is a land of agriculture and small holdings. The party has not yet tried to work in the country. At the elections it limits itself to a few towns, for they are all still backward. The largest town, Belgrad, has only 12,000 electors, in a few other towns the numbers vary from 1000 to 3000, but the majority of the towns have only a few hundred electors. The representatives for Parliament are elected in the towns and in circles and this way: each circle elects a certain number of representatives in proportion to the number of electors, each list, elective list posted in an election circle, must contain the fixed number of representatives. The mode of election is proportional. The towns, as already stated each elect on their own account. Thus Belgrad elects in proportion 4 representatives, Kragujevac and Nis each 2 in which the two lists which have the greatest number of votes each get a seat. in case none of them get an absolute majority to have both seats. The other towns each choose one representative by the absolute majority of the votes given. Should no list get an absolute majority on the first day, then at the next elections the seat goes to that list which has a relative majority. The voting is secret and direct.

The election results of our Party are rendered very difficult by the constant emigration of those workingmen, who are gaining enlightenment and education through the socialist movement, but in particular does the Census of 15 Dinar direct taxes injure us. The direct taxes amount to 37,20 % of the total taxes, whereas the indirect taxes, which do not come into consideration at all for the right of vote, amount to 62.80 %. There are a lot of obstacles which render the right of vote more difficult. Thus often the notifications of the workingmen for payment of taxes are not accepted, and then they are purposely not declared taxable in time, though the right of vote depends on this, and furthermore the right to vote is cancelled by change of dwellingplace, etc.

In Servia there 1,153,458 adult inhabitants (not including the women) out of this number only 548,167 have the right to

vote. For this reason our Party since 1906 is waging continual agitation through the press and at meetings for the universal suffrage and in 1908 a petition was put before the Skupshtina which demanded universal suffrage. Since 1908 our press has also made progress. The central organ of the Party and of the central federation of trades unions *Radnicke Novine* appears thrice a week with 5000 copies *Radnik* (in Kragujevac) appears once a week with 1200 copies and the *Tipografski Glasnik* once a month with 600 copies. Since the beginning of 1910 the Party publishes the paper *Borba* (Battle) which appears twice a month with 1200 copies.

Besides these periodicals and daily papers, the Party publishes an edition of works, comprising translations of the classical works of Marx, Engels, Kautsky, etc.; it also publishes an edition for agitation purposes. From time to time the Party brings out other socialist works.

Freedom of the Press rules comparatively in Servia. There is neither censor nor are there preventive measures. The strictest of the repressive measures are : confiscation for lèse-majesté and inciting the people to revolt. But in spite of this the social democratic press is often persecuted. Thus according to the report handed in by the Party committee at the last congress, the editorial staff of the *Radnicke Novine* alone has been sentenced to 6 years and 2 months imprisonment, and 5900 Dinar fines.

The education of the party members is provided for by the press and lectures and also by the party school. The courses last from October 1, to March 1. Lectures are principally given on theory and practice, of socialism, and natural sciences.

Since its formation the party has been affiliated with the International Socialist Bureau.

The trades union organisations had 5,350 members in 1906 but this figure went up to 5,434 in 1907, but dwindled down to 3,238 in 1908. This reduction is due to the protracted customs fight with Austria Hungary, also to the annexation crisis and finally to the great economic crisis, which brought

with it unemployment and material want for the labour class. In 1909 the number of members is again on the increase in the organisations for at the end of that year the membership numbers stood at 4,800.

The trades unions took part in the following strikes :

Year	Strikes	Workingmen on strike
1907	27	3,009
1908	18	1,538
1909	?	?

The intimate connection between the trades unions organisations and the Party have resulted in mutual action in all important political and economic questions. An organic bond unites the political and economic organisations and the influence they have on each other is very beneficial. We must also add that within the last three years the May holiday has been observed by complete cessation of work not only in Belgrad, but also in other towns. Special demonstrations are held for universal suffrage.

May 1910.

In the name of the Committee :

D. LAPPEVIC,  
N. KOSANIN.

M<sup>me</sup> BRISMÉE, RUE DE LA PRÉVOTÉ, 11, BRUXELLES.